

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-11 are currently pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3 and 5 are amended and claim 2 is canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. Support for the amendments to claim 1 can be found at least in original claim 2. Claims 3 and 5 are amended to be in independent form. No new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance by amending the claims to include the allowable subject matter; and (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration because the Examiner has previously indicated that the subject matter recited in the amended claims is allowable. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Leslie at the interview held November 27, 2007, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for maintaining the indication that claims 2-10 contain allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 2, and claims 3 and 5 are amended into independent form. Therefore, all of the claims are allowable for at least these reasons.

Claims 1 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over Ishizaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,561,751). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 2. Thus, for at least these reasons, claim 1 and claim 11 depending therefrom, are patentable over Ishizaki. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: December 18, 2007

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